

MERTON ABBEY DYE BOOK (1882-1891)

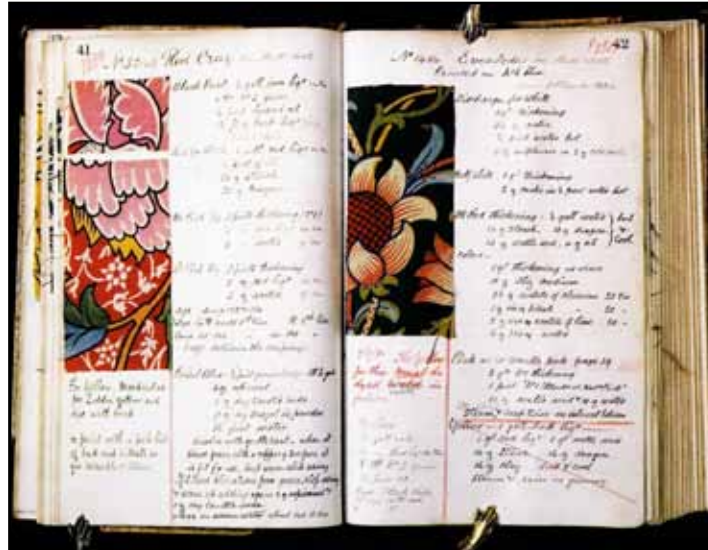


Image Courtesy of: Essential William Morris
by Ian Zaczek

TREASURE DESCRIPTION:

A handwritten ledger detailing the dye recipes needed for each of William Morris' colour printed fabric designs.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The dye recipes documented serve as a visual reference to the painstaking process of Morris' fabric dyeing and printing. It represents a hugely important contribution to art and craft history as well as to the textile industry itself.

It is unfortunate that this wonderful book is not available to view in the UK, the place in which it was created. One can only imagine the labour and love that went into it.

SIGNIFICANT PEOPLE

Created by *William Morris* between 1882 and 1891.

VOLUNTEER REFLECTIONS

Having studied illustration the visual appeal of sketchbooks and note taking was an important part of my creative process. To see that there is a similar book that exists of such beauty, created by fellow artist William Morris, is wonderful to see.

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FURTHER INFORMATION

Sanford and Helen Berger sold their Morris collection in 1999, described in the article below. The exact location of the dye book is unknown.

Article: <http://www.nasw.org/users/Katwong/publications/mocoherald/artsale.html>

Bruce Washburn (ArchiveGrid Team, OCLC Research, San Mateo CA USA) provided the link below. A digital record exists at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee's Peck School of the Arts Slide Collection, however there is restricted access:

<http://collections.lib.uwm.edu/cdm/ref/collection/asc/id/488>

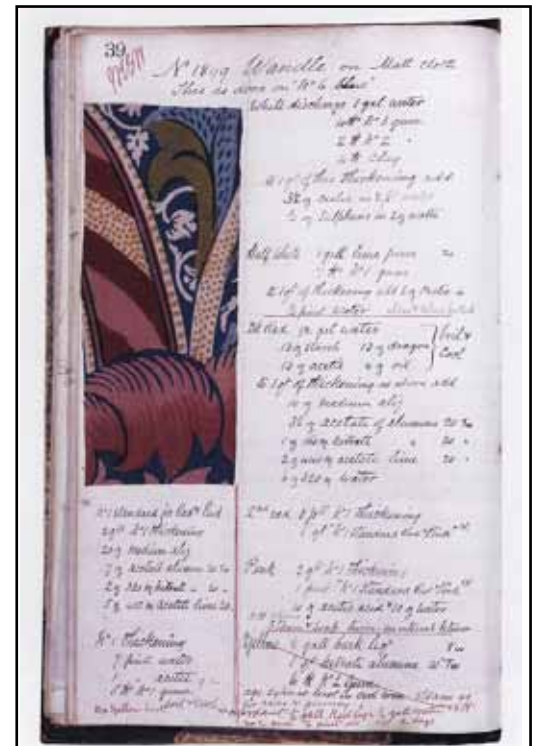


Photo Courtesy: *Bexie Bush* on *Pinterest*

This further online reference details dye related items is available to view at the Getty Research Institute, California: <http://beta.worldcat.org/archivegrid/collection/data/81665764>

“Series II. Notes relating to dyeing experiments with fabric, n.d. 2 sheets of the notes by Morris are on paper headed “Kelmscott House, Upper Mall, Hammersmith.” 1 sheet of the notes relates to monitoring fading, aging and discoloration of dyes on windowed swatches of fabric. The fourth sheet consists of Morris’ conclusions, drawn from the experiments, regarding the best methods and techniques for dyeing fabrics.”

The physical item is likely to be available for researchers at the *Huntington Library* in California for researchers:
www.huntington.org

References:

Saxby, David (1995) *William Morris at Merton*

Wilhide, Elizabeth (1997) *William Morris Decor and Design*

William Morris Fan Club, 2010: <http://wmmorrisfanclub.blogspot.co.uk/2010/04/william-morris-notebooks.html>

Pinterest.com, 2015: www.pinterest.com/search/pins/?q=merton%20abbey%20dye%20book